The A. F. of L. Weekly News Service gives news accounts and editorial interpretations of matters affecting labor occurring in the industrial, legislative, and judicial fields, and contains other information of benefit to the trade union movement.

AMERICAN FEDERATION OF LABOR

WEEKLY NEWS SERVICE

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WHOLE NO. 1593 WILLIAM GREEN, President WASHINGTON, D. C., TUESDAY, OCTOBER 21, 1941 GEORGE MEANY, Secretary-Treasurer VOL. 31. NO. 42

AFL Strengthens Policy Against Racketeers In Affiliated Unions

Prompt Action Urged to Bar Wrongdoers From Labor's Ranks; Criminals Banned From Central Bodies and State Labor Federations

Seattle, Wash.—In the strongest declaration against wrongdoing and racketeering in union ranks ever adopted, the sixty-first annual convention of the American Federation of Labor ruled that no person convicted of a crime can be seated in central bodies and State Federations of Labor.

This method, which was adopted in 1935 to purge Communists from positions of influence and which proved highly effective, is expected to assist the cleanup drive initiated by national and international unions after the 1940 convention called upon them to take sweeping action.

The convention noted and approved the beneficial results of the racketeer purge during the past year and urged every national and international union which has not yet done so to adopt laws and regulations preventing criminals from holding union office.

The report of the resolutions committee, which was adopted unanimously by the convention, said in part:

"The National and International Unions have established and maintained clean and honorable labor organizations given over to the promotion of benefits and interests of their members. That is manifested by the thousands of agreements with employers providing for fair wages, limited hours and improved working conditions for the members of these unions. It is further manifested in the hundreds of state and national legislative enactments establishing the best working standards for workers anywhere in the world.

"However, in organizations, the membership of which totals more than five millions of persons, there will be found a few dishonest individuals. These individuals may be ordinary members or may be persons in high office. The dishonest individual and the law-breaker is not confined to any particular class or position, nor to any particular institution.

"The affiliates of the American Federation of Labor, and the American Federation of Labor itself, have condemned the racketeer, the gangster, and the criminal in most vigorous terms, whether he is in the ranks of labor or in the ranks of any other organization or institution.

"Although the American Federation of Labor has no authority to discipline officers of International Unions, or locals affiliated with Internationals, or the membership affiliated with such locals, it has nevertheless called upon National and International Organizations to take prompt and decisive action, when men of this kind are found, to discipline offenders within their organizations and to rid themselves of criminals, racketeers, dishonest persons and violators of law.

"The law requires that regardless of the position in the union of the person accused and regardless of the character or magnitude of the accusation, charges must be preferred and a hearing accorded the accused.

"A number of International Unions, which have in the past year held conventions, have revised and amended their constitutions so as to vest specific power in the general officers and boards to prefer such charges, to conduct such trials, to take over local unions and appoint receivers for them, and to make mandatory upon local unions their duty to expel any officer or member who has been found guilty of crime or serious wrong-doing which tends to bring dishonor on the union. It is gratifying to the American Federation of Labor to observe this ready response on the part of these Internationals to the request of the American Federation of Labor.

"The American Federation of Labor again calls upon all National and International Unions to re-examine their constitution, laws and rules, and at the earliest opportunity amend the same where amendments are necessary, so that prompt and diligent action may be taken against locals, officers and members who are guilty of offenses against public laws, and the laws of the National or International Union.

"Labor has always sought to maintain a clean house. With the surge and influx of new members since the end of the depression, the problem of preventing the entrance and activities of the racketeer and the criminal, has become of utmost importance. Millions of men and women who belong to trade unions will not tolerate the racketeer, the gangster, and the criminal in their midst. They will eliminate him, and have eliminated him. Insofar as public prosecutions are concerned, the law vests that function only with the public authorities.

"No one more than the labor movement itself, understands the value of public confidence. The American Federation of Labor appreciates the necessity for National and International Unions and their affiliates to maintain that confidence by elimination of the racketeer and the criminal from their ranks.

"Therefore, the American Federation of Labor once again calls upon its affiliates to take prompt action whenever racketeering, wrong-doing, or other crime is engaged in by any of its officers or members, which tends to bring dishonor on the trade union movement. To that end the American Federation of Labor will give every aid and support to its affiliated organizations.

"Insofar as the American Federation of Labor is concerned with respect to those directly affiliated organizations over which there has been delegated to it the power to discipline officers and members of such unions and to discipline such unions, the American Federation of Labor has acted with promptness and decisiveness. Members have been ordered expelled, officers removed, and charters revoked when, after trial, an offender has been found guilty.

"In order to further the program of wiping out racketeering and crime wherever it may exist, the American Federation of Labor directs all central bodies to refuse the seating of any delegate from a union who has been convicted of serious wrong-doing which reflects dishonor on the trade union movement; and such delegate, if convicted after being seated, shall be unseated by such central labor body."

Bates Defends Stabilization Pact With AFL Building Trades Unions

Detroit, Mich.—Harry C. Bates, president of the Bricklayers, Masons and Plasterers International Union of America and Vice President of the American Federation of Labor, in an address to the A. F. of L. convention here severely indicted the combination of the C.I.O. Construction Workers Union and Representatives Clare Hoffman of Michigan and Howard W. Smith of Virginia for their attack on the national defense program based on the refusal of the Office of Production Management to award a contract for housing in Detroit to Patrick J. Currier, notorious anti-union mill owner. In equally strong language Mr. Bates defended the stabilization agreement between the A. F. of L. Building and Construction Trades Department and the government construction agencies.

Pointing out Currier's long hostility to the American Federation of Labor both as to wages and working conditions and his attempt to force his employes to join the C.I.O., and stressing the falseness of the charge that the A. F. of L. has been given a "monopoly on defense construction," Mr. Bates gave the convention the real story of the stabilization agreement, which was announced in full text last July 24th. He said, in part:

"In that agreement the Building Trades Unions showed their patriotism by agreeing not to strike on defense jobs, and by relinquishing special prerogatives, including double pay for overtime, which had been enjoyed very widely. These concessions saved millions of dollars to the government—but the saving of dollars was not the important thing, either to the government or to the unions.

"The regularization of employment, together with the mobilization of the supply of workers by the Building Trades Unions, enable the government to insure that the defense job would be done. It enabled the defense program to work out methods for orderly transfer of labor, without cost to the government, for the construction of huge projects in out-of-the-way locations. It set up a uniform structure of wages and working conditions which discouraged labor raiding, and enabled skilled and semi-skilled Building Trades workers to get jobs near their homes.

"Unlike most union organized efforts, the C.I.O. Construction Workers' Union was aimed at an industry which was not only well-organized but also one in which the organized labor movement has after many years of struggle established high standards of wages and conditions. These wages and conditions played a prominent part in the effort of thousands and thousands of workers, both organized and unorganized, in maintaining their wage rates during the last decade.

"By back-door methods, by secret deals with anti-labor employers such as Currier, this C.I.O. union is endeavoring to destroy the benefits enjoyed by the Building Trades Unions of the A. F. of L.

"This attack upon the Building Trades unions and upon the action of the Office of Production Management is more than an effort to obtain a housing contract for a notorious anti-union operator.

"It is an attack upon the defense program, and an attack upon the position of the A. F. of L. building trades unions. It is an attack upon the standards of wages and working conditions which our unions have developed over many years of bitter struggle. It is an attack upon our entire standard of living.

"I want to announce here and now a warning to the American people to be on their guard against the vicious attack now being made on the Building Trades unions of the A. F. of L. by the obstructionist labor-hating Congressmen, by labor-hating columnists and labor-hating firms like the Currier firm and those in league with them."

A. F. L. CONTINUES I.L.O. MEMBERSHIP

Also Supports World Labor Unit, Aid for Latin-American Workers and Jewish Homeland

Seattle, Wash.—The sixty-first annual convention of the American Federation of Labor voted to continue the Federation's membership in the International Labor Organization and the International Federation of Trade Unions, pledged its aid to the workers in Latin America through extending the functions of the Pan American Federation of Labor, and encouraged the movement to make a Jewish homeland in Palestine a fact instead of a theory.

Pointing out that the transfer of the I. L. O. headquarters from Geneva, Switzerland, to McGill University, Montreal, Canada, had been made because of the difficulties of functioning in Europe under the threat of totalitarianism, the convention expressed its gratification that upon the resignation of John G. Winant as I. L. O. director, Edward T. Phelan, who had served as an I. L. O. official since its establishment, was appointed acting director, and adopted the recommendation of the Executive Council that Mr. Phelan be elected director at the next meeting of the I. L. O., which convenes in New York City on October 27, with representatives from thirty countries present.

The continued affiliation of the American Federation of Labor with the International Labor Organization, the convention said, would be "the outward evidence of our steadfast determination to share fully and without reservation in helping to build, in cooperation with other free nations, the world of tomorrow."

Turning to the International Federation of Trade Unions, the convention said that with the destruction of the functioning of free trade unions in practically all of Continental Europe by Hitler's legions, "the one agency of protest, the one organization through which the subjected people, and particularly oppressed workers, have been able to express themselves has been the International Federation of Trade Unions."

Stressing the importance of all possible aid to the workers in countries under the Nazi-Fascist dictatorship, the convention reaffirmed "its pledge of support to the I. F. T. U., and to the cause which it serves so ably and so well, so that we as an intimate part of the world family of free trade unions may participate fully and wholeheartedly in the social as well as the economic reconstruction of the world that is to follow."

In the field of Latin American labor relations the convention emphasized the constructive results flowing from the activities of Vice President Matthew Woll of the A. F. of L. who attended the recent convention of the Mexican Federation of Labor as a fraternal delegate. President Manuel Avila Camacho of Mexico assured Mr. Woll of his desire to cooperate in a program which the Mexican workers might initiate and gave his support looking to the development of the Pan American Federation of Labor.

As a measure to facilitate a constructive program in Latin-American labor relations the convention recommended "that labor officials from each of the countries of the Western Hemisphere be asked to meet informally to consider the basis for a more formal conference of the Pan American Federation of Labor; to discuss not only broad general terms of social welfare, but include specific means and processes through which to give practical expression to these ideals."

Expressing its deep sympathy for the persecution of the Jewish people and their desire to establish a homeland in Palestine, the convention recommended that when this war against the barbarism of Hitler, and of black absolutism, is over, when freedom and democracy once more may breathe in peace throughout the world, that Great Britain in cooperation with the United States, and other democratic countries, will take the necessary steps to implement the Balfour Declaration of 1917 in its full meaning by facilitating further immigration and a large scale settlement of Jewish laboring masses in their national home in Palestine. Genuine equality of the Jewish among the nations of the earth can only be advanced through restoring their national life on the soil of Palestine."

WORKERS EYE INJURIES ARE MOSTLY NEEDLESS

New York, N. Y.—Ninety-eight per cent of the eye injuries which occur in American industries at the rate of 1,000 a day and represent an annual loss of $200,000,000 are wholly unnecessary, according to a study sponsored by the National Society for the Prevention of Blindness and issued by the Columbia University Press.

The report, prepared by the late Louis Resnick, staff member of the society for 20 years, said:

"Practically all the financial loss and the human suffering resulting from the blinding of industrial workers could be averted by the cooperation of employers and employees in the utilization of demonstrated methods of preventing accidents and diseases. Not only would these losses be averted but also efficiency and the earnings of both employers and employees would be substantially increased if all industry did what is being done successfully in a few plants in America to prevent eye injuries.

NAVY YARD WORKERS WIN INCREASED PAY

Washington, D. C.—Over 100,000 workers in the Government Navy Yards on the Atlantic Coast are greatly pleased with the action of the Navy Department in granting wage increases amounting to many millions of dollars a year.

The raise in rates of pay was a distinct victory for the Metal Trades Department of the American Federation of Labor, which for a number of months had conducted a campaign for higher pay to bring the Navy Yard employes up to comparable earnings in private industries.

The wage increases range from a few cents an hour for most crafts in the Northern yards to as much as thirty-two cents an hour in some Southern yards.

A. F. OF L. FIGHTS WAGE FREEZING

Demands Separation of Wage Policies from Plans to Freeze Prices of Commodities

Seattle, Wash.—Firm opposition to proposals to stabilize wages was expressed by the annual convention of the American Federation of Labor here in a statement which exposed the fallacy of coupling wage policies with schemes for price control or price freezing.

"Wage rates," the convention declared, "fix the income of wage earners, determine the standards of living for their families, and condition their ability to share in social and economic progress. Our unions, through collective bargaining, fix standards above those minima established by administrative procedure and endeavor to secure for workers compensation based upon their contributions to production.

"Industrial records, cited by the Executive Council Report, show that labor is entitled to larger compensation; production per man hour increased 43 per cent between 1929 and 1941 while labor costs per unit of product declined 6.5 per cent.

"Wages constituted a relatively small part of production costs and therefore do not automatically force price rises as some maintain. It is especially important under present conditions for all unions to have adequate industrial and financial information to sustain their wage contentions. While we realize present danger of inflation makes it necessary for the unions together with all other groups to cooperate to curb inflationary tendencies we cannot be deluded into believing that wages should be frozen. Stabilization and maintenance of the status quo are not necessarily the same thing.

"As the Executive Council Report points out, wage policies should not be confused with any proposal for price control or price freezing. Wages are incomes paid to persons as compensation for work. Prices are the market valuation of commodities. As the American Federation of Labor had written into the Clayton Anti-Trust Act and later in the basic principles of the I. L. O., 'The labor of a human being is not a commodity or an article of commerce.'

"Payment for work must be determined between the individual rendering the work and the employer, or between their representatives. This procedure is inseparable from human freedom and dignity which lies at the base of democratic institutions and controls their nature and operations. If we are to defend free institutions we must continue to function as free people, with representation in the making of policies and decisions which concern our well-being.

"Any form of price control will indirectly affect wages when union representatives negotiate for labor's share of the returns of the employing companies. Direct fixing of wages would constitute income control which, when applied to employes, will involve fixing of profits. On the other hand, price control will indirectly affect profits as well as wages.

"What labor wants from price control is an economic stability that will enable industries to operate and all individuals and public agencies to be able to plan to expend their incomes to the best advantage of all concerned. Without stability there can be no security of income, investments, or other property.

"The Price Control Bill of the Administration wisely does not propose to fix wages but authorizes the President to fix prices with adequate provisions for hearings within time limits, and with limits on the duration of this authority."

LIFE INSURANCE AGENTS CHOOSE AFL AFFILIATE

Washington, D. C.—In an election conducted by the National Labor Relations Board among the insurance agents employed by the Home Beneficial Life Insurance Company in the Lynchburg, Va., district, 35 out of 40 employes voted for the American Federation of Labor as their collective bargaining representative. The home office of the company is in Richmond, Va., the field of its operation covering Tennessee, Virginia, Maryland, Delaware and the District of Columbia.

LABOR UNITY HOPE RENEWED BY AFL

Convention Denounces CIO Raids On AFL Unions As Application of Hitler's Policy

Seattle, Wash.—The 61st annual convention of the American Federation of Labor adopted unanimously the report of the Resolutions Committee reaffirming the profound desire of the Federation for a united labor movement and expressed regret that the continuation of a dual organization was definitely attached to the policy of division sponsored by the forces that control the C. I. O., resulting in a lowering of the contribution which organized labor would otherwise have given to the nation during the period of national emergency.

As a special hindrance to the development of unity the report cited the continued attempts to raid A. F. of L. unions by the C. I. O.

"It is inescapable that when the present crisis has been passed, that this division in the ranks of labor will even more acutely disturb and dislocate the relationships between management and labor," the report declared. "Because we must take the post-war period into consideration, it is encouraging to find that the officers of the American Federation of Labor are continuing their policy of an open door, and their effort to re-establish a unification of the American trade union movement.

"It is only necessary to remind the convention of the public statements made by the master spirit of the C. I. O., to indicate the outstanding reason why unity has not been previously established.

"Because of the constant efforts made by the C. I. O. to raid our unions and their membership, and to set up dual International Unions to those within the fold of the American Federation of Labor, it is essential that our trade union movement protect itself against the efforts to destroy it; efforts which, unfortunately, in many instances have received the encouragement and assistance of individuals holding public office. As to the question of maintaining what we have and of increasing our membership, the helpful influence of our International Unions affects the membership locally as well as nationally.

"The policy which has been carried out by the C. I. O. from the beginning, in many instances, is similar to that which has been applied by Adolph Hitler, promises and pledges to be broken when it seems advantageous. First, we were assured that the sole purpose of the C. I. O. was to carry on an educational campaign. We were then assured in an official statement issued by the head of the C. I. O. that in such organizing work as it would carry on, it would be confined solely to the field of the unorganized.

"Hardly had this statement been made than the first organizing efforts made by the C. I. O. were raids upon the membership of existing International Unions, in many instances an effort to secure control of trade unions at that time under trade union agreements with their employers. The similarity to Hitler's tactics does not end here, but the carefully planned program of the leaders of the C. I. O. led to campaigns first against one International Union, and then against another.

"Had the original raiding policy been carried out generally against all of our affiliated International Unions, they would have united in developing a program of self-defense. But by making an effort first in one industry and then in another, they had hoped to create a feeling of security in the minds of other International Unions. First they directed their campaign against the metal trades. Then in turn they entered the field of the building trades, and recently directed their efforts against the transportation trades.

"There is but one way to meet these tactics, and that is for the American Federation of Labor itself and its affiliated International Unions to give their collective support to every local union in the small communities as well as those in the industrial centers, so that this present effort to supplant the American trade union movement and establish this alleged 'new order' can be overcome.

"While your committee calls upon the affiliated International Unions to merge their forces for self-defense because of the attacks made upon us, your committee nevertheless urges the officers of the American Federation of Labor to continue their efforts to re-establish unity in the family of labor."

LABOR LAW VIOLATORS FINED OVER $11,000

New York, N. Y.—In 1,966 decisions rendered by New York City courts during the first nine months of 1941 in prosecutions against New York City employers for failure to carry workmen's compensation insurance, the defendants were found guilty in more than 95 per cent of the cases, Industrial Commissioner Frieda S. Miller reported. Fines were imposed on 1,510 of those convicted for a total of $11,461, with sentences suspended in 375 cases.

$44,564 UNPAID WAGES COLLECTED FOR WORKERS

San Francisco, Calif. — Unpaid wages amounting to $44,564 were recovered for California workers during September, H. C. Carrasco, State Labor Commissioner, reported. For the first 9 months, more than $475,000 was recovered representing an increase of 12 per cent over the same period last year.

Green, Meany and 13 Council Members Re-Elected As Convention Closes

Delegates Back Roosevelt's Foreign Policies, Condemn Racketeers, Urge Labor Unity, Suspend Brewery Workers, Support Defense

Seattle, Wash.—President William Green was re-elected chief executive of the American Federation of Labor for the eighteenth consecutive term without a single dissenting voice as the sixty-first annual convention concluded its sessions.

Secretary-Treasurer George Meany was also unanimously re-elected, as were all other members of the Executive Council except one.

By a vote of 37,944 to 421 the delegates defeated George Browne, of the International Association of Theatrical Stage Employes for re-election as eleventh Vice President of the A. F. of L. He ran against Edward Flore, president of the Hotel and Restaurant Employes, who was moved up from twelfth to eleventh in the list of vice presidents.

Other outstanding actions of the final week of the convention included:

1—Adoption by unanimous vote of a strong stand in support of President Roosevelt's foreign policies and in furtherance of the national defense program.

2—Issuance of a convention call for a purge of racketeers from union ranks, together with the adoption of a new law banning anyone convicted of a crime from being seated in any central body.

3—Declaration of purpose to continue to seek restoration of unity in the labor movement, while resisting reprehensible efforts of the CIO to raid established A. F. of L. union organizations.

4—Formation of an organizing program designed to organize hundreds of thousands of unorganized workers during the coming year and lift the Federation's dues-paid membership total over the five million mark.

5—Strengthening of resistance to anti-labor legislation aimed at destroying the democratic rights of free trade unions.

6—Suspension of the Brewery Workers Union for failure to abide by jurisdictional rulings of the Federation.

7—Adoption of a program to extend aid to oppressed workers in other lands and to knit them together for the common purpose of restoring the rights of workers everywhere after the war is over.

The convention directed President Green to appoint a committee to study the entire problem of post-war reconstruction. The Federation's officers also were instructed to request Congress to appoint a national committee for the same purpose. Representatives of labor, industry, government and agriculture should serve on the national committee, the convention urged.

One of the outstanding resolutions on national defense adopted by the convention read as follows:

"The American Federation of Labor does hereby pledge its fullest support to the national defense program.

"We concur in President Roosevelt's policy of all possible aid to Great Britain and Russia and all other countries fighting Hitlerism.

"We support the policy of a complete embargo on all war materials destined for Japan and urge all possible assistance to China."

Workers' Living Standards Menaced By Price Inflation, A. F. L. Declares

Washington, D. C.—The constant rise in prices has already reduced the living standards of thousands of American workers, according to the October issue of "Labor's Monthly Survey," an A. F. of L. publication.

Declaring that "inflation is upon us," the Survey said:

"Workers throughout the country are thoroughly alarmed by the swift upward trend of living costs. From March to August cost of living rose 4.7 per cent. In August it was 5.6 per cent higher than last year and 7.5 per cent above prewar. Before spring, we are told, living costs will rise another 10 per cent unless adequate price controls can be established. Such a rise would amount to the same thing as a 10 per cent wage cut for every worker in the United States. And the end is not here. Prices will continue to spiral upward, destroying workers' living standards, disrupting the defense program, threatening to cut in half the value of every pay envelope, every savings account, every insurance policy, every Social Security payment in the country. The inflation of which we were warned in July is now here. It is doubtful whether democracy can survive it unless adequate controls are established.

"The country must decide now on a system of price control. Unless we establish it now, voluntarily, through a law passed by Congress with the understanding and will of the people behind it, we shall without the shadow of a doubt be forced into chaos where eventually totalitarian control will be urged as the only way out.

"Labor is deeply concerned about this issue. We are concerned, too, about the kinds of price control established. First we want to clear away the false impression that wage increases are a major cause of rising prices and that wage 'ceilings' should be established to stop wage increases.

"This year's wage increases have added little to manufacturing costs in four industries. Skyrocketing prices were not due to costs arising from wages. In cotton goods, a 14 per cent wage increase added only 5½ per cent to manufacturing costs but prices rose almost 40 per cent; in automobiles a 13 per cent wage increase added only 2.4 per cent to costs and was more than covered by a 5 per cent price increase; in lumber and petroleum wage increases of 11 per cent and 6 per cent added little or nothing to costs while prices rose 30 per cent and 23 per cent respectively. Because of labor's productivity and because wages form only a small part of a company's total expense, a substantial wage increase adds relatively little to costs. These four industries are typical of industries in general. In manufacturing as a whole, wage increases added only 2 per cent to total costs this year, but prices rose 13½ per cent.

"Even the small increase in costs due to rising wages has been largely offset by expanding production and savings in overhead. Actually, an average price increase of less than 2 per cent would have been enough to compensate for this year's wage increases. Yet in some industries, due to higher material costs, speculation, profiteering or other causes, prices have skyrocketed. It is not the price rises of 2 per cent or even 5 per cent in a year that spell inflation, but those skyrocketing price increases of 20 per cent and more.

"American labor recognizes the danger of starting price spirals. We therefore repeat our principles of wage adjustment: Wages should be determined by collective bargaining based on facts which show the company's ability to pay; an adequate wage is a first charge on any business, and inefficient management is no excuse for paying wages below a decent standard."

REYNOLDS COMPANIES SIGN UNION SHOP AGREEMENTS

Sheffield, Ala.—Closed shop agreements have been signed here between the Reynolds Aluminum Company, the Reynolds Alloys, Inc., and the Muscle Shoals Federated Aluminum Council, governing all working conditions and wage scales on two big jobs. The Aluminum Council is made up of AFL unions.

The two companies are doing work that will run into many millions of dollars in construction and installation, and employ large numbers of workers when placed in actual operation. A temporary minimum wage of 55 cents an hour was adopted for common and unskilled labor, and $1.06 an hour for skilled labor.

A. F. OF L. COPPER MINERS WIN WAGE INCREASES

Copperhill, Tenn.—Renewal of the agreement between the A. F. of L. Unions at Copperhill and Ducktown, Tenn., with the Tennessee Copper Company provides for an increase of 10 cents an hour for an increase of ers employed by this big concern, and $18 a month increase for all monthly salaried employes under jurisdiction of the Union. This increase brings the minimum pay for common labor in the Copper Basin to 60 cents an hour, with wage rates for skilled labor ranging from $1 to $1.37½ an hour.

NO REAL BASIS EXISTS FOR LONGER WORK WEEK

Figures cited by the American Federation of Labor conclusively demonstrate the lack of a genuine basis for the claim that a work week in excess of forty hours is necessary to adequate mobilize productive forces for national defense.

Urging the necessity of maintaining the forty hour week, the A. F. of L. made the following terse statement:

"There has been talk recently of lengthening the work week as a measure to speed defense production. No basis can be found for such a move at the present time. There are still 4,500,000 unemployed. Several million more are threatened by priority unemployment, and will be leaving civilian industries to find work in defense production. Also, some three million more persons who do not usually work for pay can be drawn into the labor market. With such a labor reserve, approaching 10,000,000, this is no time to lengthen work hours.

"Throughout our defense effort thus far the 40 hour week has been maintained, and hours worked over 40 have been paid for at overtime rates. The enormous increase in defense production, such as airplanes, ships, machinery, has been accomplished by increasing employment and not by lengthening the work week. The overtime penalty has served to get employers to train new employees, and thousands of men have gone to work with opportunity to learn new skills because of it."